

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 FEA-01 ERDA-05 AID-05 CEA-01  
CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-08 FPC-01 H-01 INR-07  
INT-05 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-05 USIA-06  
OES-07 SP-02 SS-15 STR-04 TRSE-00 ACDA-07 PA-01  
PRS-01 /104 W

-----033637 100404Z /13

R 091545Z SEP 77

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7056

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY OSLO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ENRG, MNUC, IT

SUBJECT: MISSING BOX, POSSIBLY OF URANIUM OXIDE, CAUSES PRESS  
FLURRY

1. SUMMARY. A 1.76 KG.BOX LABELLED URANIUM OXIDE WAS  
DISCOVERED LAST WEEK ABOARD A NORWEGIAN VESSEL IN THE PERSIAN  
GULF. BOX WAS UNDOCUMENTED, EXCPET FOR LABEL WHICH SHOWED  
IT WAS SHIPPED LAST YEAR FROM AN AMERICAN FIRM TO ITS GERMAN  
SUBSIDIARY. ITALIAN AUTHORITIES, NOTIFIED BY NORWEGIAN  
COUNTERPART, UNLOADED BOX IN PORT OF ANCONA (SHIP'S NEXT  
PORT OF CALL) BUT HAVE NOT YET OPENED IT. INTIAL SCAN  
DID NOT SHOW RADIOACTIVITY. PRESS STORIES HERE HAVE CLAIMED  
THE BOX IS ENRICHED URANIUM AND THAT ITS DISCOVERY HAS CAUSED  
CONCERN AMONG NATO SECRET SERVICES. END SUMMARY.

2. ITALIAN NUCLEAR ENERGY COMMISSION (CNEN)  
DIRECTOR FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, DR. ALBONETTI, TOLD  
EMBOFF SEPT. 7 OF STRANGE DISCOVERY OF A 1.76KG. BOX  
MARKED URNAIUM OXIDE ABOARD THE NORWEGIAN SHIP "BOW  
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OAK" IN THE PERSIAN GULF DURING A ROUTINE SHIP  
INVENTORY. LABEL SHOWED THAT THE BOX WAS SHIPPED  
LAST AUGUST FROM THE VENTRON CORPORTATION OF BEVERLY,  
MASS. TO ITS GERMAN SUBSIDIARY IN KARLSRUHE. FOUR BOXES  
OF URANIUM OXIDE WERE SHIPPED AT THAT TIME; ONLY  
THREE ARRIVED.

3. NORWEGIAN NUCLEAR ENERGY AUTHORITIES, INFORMED OF THE DISCOVERY, CONTACTED GERMAN COUNTERPARTS, AND AS THE SHIP'S NEXT PORT OF CALL WAS ANCONA, ASKED CNEN TO UNLOAD AND EXAMINE THE BOX. WHILE BOX HAS NOT YET BEEN OPENED, ALBONETTI SAID PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION INDICATED CONTENTS WERE NOT RADIOACTIVE.

4. ALBONETTI HOPED TO KEEP THE DISCOVERY QUIET UNTIL BOX'S CONTENTS HAD BEEN ANALYZED. HE HAS NOT BEEN SUCCESSFUL AS SEVERAL ITALIAN PAPERS ON SEPT. 8 AND 9 HAVE REPORTED THE STORY. THE ARTICLES ARE MORE OR LESS FACTUAL EXCEPT THEY HAVE CLAIMED THE CONTENTS ARE ENRICHED URANIUM AND SPECULATED THAT VARIOUS NATO "SECRET SERVICES" ARE IN A DITHER OVER THE DISCOVERY.

5. CNEN HAS KEPT IN CONTACT WITH EMBASSY AND EXPECTS TO HAVE COMPLETED ITS ANALYSIS BY TOMORROW.

6. COMMENT: WHEN WE KNOW WHAT CONTENTS ARE, IT MIGHT BE USEFUL FOR WASHINGTON TO CONTACT THE VENTRON COPR. (CONGRESS STREET, BEVERLY, MASS., TEL: 617-922.1875) AND ASK FOR THEIR VERSION OF WHY THE BOX NEVER ARRIVED IN GERMANY.  
GARDNER

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NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** URANIUM, PRESS COMMENTS, MARINE CARGO, INVESTIGATIONS, TRANSACTION CHECKS  
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**Copy:** SINGLE  
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**Decaption Date:** 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
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**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Office:** ACTION EUR  
**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
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**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
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**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
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**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**SAS ID:** 1330876  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** MISSING BOX, POSSIBLY OF URANIUM OXIDE, CAUSES PRESS FLURRY  
**TAGS:** ENRG, MNUC, ESTC, IT, US  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**vdkgvwkey:** odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS\_Docs/35419849-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
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